

# St. Olaf Study Travel

*Go behind the seen*

## From the Beaches of Normandy to the Ports of Brittany

**Program leaders: Rich Allen, professor of computer science,  
and Wendy Allen, professor of French**

May 31–June 10, 2011

Explore all that the northwestern regions of France have to offer – the breathtaking countryside, historic beaches, quaint ports, charming chapels, and of course, France’s famous cuisine.

Known for its traditional rural landscapes dotted with blooming apple trees, peacefully grazing cows, wood-covered hillsides, and gently sloping valleys, Normandy is also dominated by the sea. It is the home of famous fortresses (one of which we will visit) and a land renowned for its rich, cream-based sauces (many of which we will sample!).

Both Normandy and Brittany are familiar to many Americans who remember the indelible images of World War II depicting the Allies landing on the beaches of Normandy and the green, cross-dotted cemeteries that provide a final resting place for those who gave their lives there. Bretons of a particular generation still talk today about the arrival of American GIs en route to the capital. We will visit the now-legendary beaches where the tide of war turned.

Brittany, the western peninsula of France, has its own, distinctive culture which has been significantly influenced by waves of successive peoples coming to reside there: the Celts, the Romans, the Franks, the English, and the French. The region has been home to at least three languages: Breton, Gallo, and French. But religion and the sea have been equally important in shaping Breton culture, which we will examine as we traverse this area on all three sides: Mt. Saint Michel in the north, Roscoff in the west, and Pont Aven in the south.

As we travel between these port cities, we will take in the picturesque countryside with its blue-shuttered, thatched-roof cottages and banks of brightly-colored hydrangeas, stopping at several *calvaires* (sacred sculptures representing the Crucifixion) belonging to a string of important chapels dotting the countryside of extreme western Brittany. Quimper, the ancient capital of Brittany’s most traditional region, is on our route as well as Locronan, arguably one of the most beautiful villages in France and home to the relics of St. Ronan, a patron saint of Brittany.

### **Program Leaders**

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Professors Richard and Wendy Allen custom designed this program based on their many years living and traveling in France since 1984. Wendy was named resident director of the Council on International Education Exchange program in Rennes and Richard worked in a computer science research group at a government lab. Their two children, Sarah (then age 4) and Joshua (then age 2), went to French kindergarten in the village public school. Thus began their love affair with Brittany.

The Allen family lived there full time for two years. Since then, they have spent every summer — as well as two sabbatical leaves — near Pont Aven in Finistere, the westernmost department of Brittany, where they owned a home. With this Study Travel program they hope to share some of the places and culture that brought them to this area.

Wendy did her undergraduate work at Connecticut College and earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at Indiana University. At St. Olaf since 1977, Wendy has taught courses in French language, culture and literature, and has led numerous January Interim courses for students in France. Her particular areas of research include 17th-century French literature, contemporary France, second language acquisition and pedagogy. She has also been deeply involved with St. Olaf’s Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum program.



Richard, a native New Englander, was an undergraduate at Boston College and earned advanced degrees at Indiana University before coming to St. Olaf in 1975. He established the computer science program here and has been involved with it ever since. For the past 25 years, Rich has conducted research on French artificial intelligence teams in Rennes and Grenoble. He has spent three successive sabbatical leaves in France working on these teams. He teaches a course on Islamic geometric patterns as a result of his Middle East work and has led with Wendy three 5-month study abroad programs for students.

### **What Our Travelers Say**

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“Wendy and Rich were a wonderful balanced pair, providing all that we needed, allowing us independence, being invaluable sources of information.”

“I cannot say enough superlatives about Rich and Wendy. They were sooooo fabulous in every way ... kind, helpful, considerate of all members of the group, and efficient. Amazingly cheerful, etc. Who could ask for anything more?”

“Keep up the great work – Study Travel with St. Olaf is outstanding!”

“Both Rich and Wendy offered a wealth of knowledge. They made it so interesting and were able to answer so many questions.”

“We tried to do a direct comparison of pricing, and we think the St. Olaf program was either no more expensive, or only slightly more expensive, than the competitors – and the competitors didn’t offer the educational component that St. Olaf did. Other programs look less expensive but require much more spending on your own once you’re there; many costs included in the St. Olaf fee were not included in the fee for other programs. It was so great to have so few decisions to make once we were there! It was a wonderful experience we will never forget! Thank you!”

“[The Allens] were wonderful leaders and great companions.”

### **What to Expect**

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Transfers between cities will be by primarily by private coach. The transfer at the end of the program from Lorient to Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris will be by high speed train. Once we have arrived in a city, we will walk from place to place. Over the course of a day, you might walk up to 5 miles, some of it over uneven terrain (e.g. cobblestones or sidewalks in disrepair), and climb stairs that may not have handrails. You will need to keep pace with an active group of travelers on long days of traveling, deal with the emotional highs and lows that can occur when experiencing a different culture, and be a considerate member of a group (prompt, courteous and flexible).

Hotels will be tourist class (three or four star) with private baths and English-speaking staff, located in city centers as much as possible.

The weather in early June should be pleasant, with highs in the upper 60s/low 70s. Light rain can be expected, so a collapsible umbrella or lightweight raincoat will be useful.

You should plan to see your family physician or a travel doctor four to six weeks prior to departure, preferably earlier, to talk about routine vaccinations. For more information on travel health, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.who.int](http://www.who.int).

### **Program Fee**

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The program fee is \$4,350 per person. Based on double occupancy, it includes discussions led by Rich and Wendy Allen, roundtrip airfare from Minneapolis, accommodations, breakfast daily and several other group meals, group tours, admissions for group activities, ground transportation and gratuities. For single occupancy, add \$400. The reduction for Land Only (making your own way to and from Paris) is \$1,050.

*Register before Feb. 1, 2011 to save \$150 per person!* At any time, the program fee is subject to airfare at the time of registration, if seats at the group rate are no longer available.

## **Register Today**

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Go “behind the seen” with St. Olaf Study Travel. Register online at [stolaf.edu/studytravel](http://stolaf.edu/studytravel), call toll-free 888-865-6537 or fax 507-646-8232. A deposit of \$500 per person guarantees your space.

## **Itinerary**

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This itinerary is subject to change.(B, L, D indicates included meals.)

### **Tuesday, May 31                      Depart United States**

Group flight departs Minneapolis.

### **Wednesday, June 1                      Arrive Paris/Transfer to Normandy (D)**

On arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport, we will immediately board our private motor coach for Colleville, Normandy. Group dinner.

### **Thursday, June 2                      Colleville/Excursion to Normandy Beaches (B, D)**

Visits via private motor coach to the renowned beaches of Normandy, where over 100,000 soldiers landed on June 6, 1944 to start the march toward Paris and Berlin. Lunch on your own at an appropriate stop. Group dinner of traditional Norman cuisine.

### **Friday, June 3                      Colleville – Mont St Michel (B, D)**

Transfer by private motor coach through the Normandy countryside to our hotel near Mont St Michel. Lunch on your own. Group dinner at the hotel.

### **Saturday, June 4                      Mont St Michel – St. Malo (B, L)**

Guided visit of Mont St Michel, a monastery built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and later fortified to withstand attacks primarily from England. Incidentally, Holland Hall on the St. Olaf campus is modeled after Mont Saint Michel. Transfer to Cancale for a seafood group lunch featuring the specialty of this city: oysters. Transfer to St. Malo for free time and dinner on your own.

### **Sunday, June 5                      St. Malo – Roscoff (B)**

All day transfer in private motor coach through the Breton countryside. Stop for lunch (pay on your own) at an appropriate point. Dinner on your own in Roscoff.

### **Monday, June 6                      Roscoff (B, D)**

Walking tour of Roscoff. Cruise to Ile de Batz for picnic lunch. Remainder of the afternoon free. Group dinner.

### **Tuesday, June 7                      Roscoff – Quimper (B, D)**

Transfer in private motor coach to Quimper, visiting *calvaires* along the way. Stop in Locronan for lunch on your own. Afternoon, continue transfer to Quimper, the historical capital of Brittany. Group dinner in Quimper.

### **Wednesday, June 8                      Quimper – Port Aven (B)**

Walking tour of Quimper, followed by a possible tour of a local pottery factory. Lunch on your own. Transfer in private motor coach to Concarneau and then to Pont Aven. Dinner on your own.

### **Thursday, June 9                      Pont Aven – CDG Airport (B, D)**

Transfer in private motor coach to nearby Lorient, where we will catch the high speed train to our hotel located at Charles de Gaulle airport. Farewell group dinner.

### **Friday, June 10                      Return to United States (B)**

Check in for flights home.